

THE
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POPULAR EDUCATION IN UPPER CANADA—
NORMAL SCHOOL AT TORONTO.

THE time has arrived when the "schoolmaster" must go "abroad" to gain instruction, as well as to impart it. The teacher who is satisfied with his own experience, and will not take the trouble to inquire what progress others are making, is in great danger of finding that he is detached from the rest of the train, and that the passengers have all gone into the "car forward."

Teachers above all other classes in the community, are favored with frequent and regular vacations, and are, therefore, the more inexcusable if they fail to become in some degree familiar with the systems and modes of instruction that are adopted in the best schools. Most of the teachers of the State are so situated that they can enjoy these advantages with only a moderate expenditure of either time or money.

Availing ourselves of a recent vacation, we went as far as Canada West, and spent several days in studying the educational system of that Province. We stopped *en passant* at Utica, with the assembled teachers of the Key-stone State, and found that the New York State Teachers' Association embraces several hundred of the best teachers in the country, with three times as much intellectual and moral power as they can bring to bear effectively in one organized body. We lingered also at Trenton Falls, near Utica, long enough to learn that it is one of the most beautiful summer retreats that an exhausted teacher could possibly desire.

A few of the impressions received during our visit to Toronto, and facts gathered there, may not be wholly destitute of interest to the readers of the "Teacher."

So much has been written and said of the Prussian system of schools, that well-informed teachers have become familiar

with most of its prominent features ; but a system of education, in some respects more complete and imposing than that of Prussia, has sprung up on our own borders, which appears to have attracted less general attention among us.

The present system of education for Upper Canada is identified with the name of the Rev. Egerton Ryerson, D. D., Chief Superintendent of Schools. Dr. Ryerson entered upon the duties of his office in 1844, and spent an entire year in examining the different systems of other countries, both in Europe and America. The results of these investigations were embodied in an elaborate Report, published in 1846, and in a bill for the establishment of an improved system of schools, which became a law the same year. The system adopted by Dr. Ryerson is eclectic. Many of the general features of the school law were borrowed from the system of the State of New York ; the principle of supporting schools according to property, was derived from Massachusetts ; the elementary text-books adopted, were those published under the sanction of the National Board of Education in Ireland ; and the system of Normal School training was derived from Germany. Dr. Ryerson acknowledges himself specially indebted to these sources, but the features he has derived from them are essentially modified in their application.

The course of instruction provided by law in Upper Canada, embraces every grade of school, from the lowest to the highest. The attention of the Educational Department is devoted more especially to the interests of Common and Grammar Schools, and yet it would be difficult to find another country in which an equal amount of pecuniary aid is furnished to students in the higher departments of education. In the University of Toronto there are distributed annually among the students about sixty scholarships, each worth \$150, besides numerous prizes and medals. The scholarships are given to those who sustain the best examinations in the different branches, at several different stages in their college course.

The Normal School at Toronto is an institution that would be an honor to any country in the world. It consists of a Normal School proper, and two Model Schools. In the Normal School, pupils are "taught how to teach ;" in the Model Schools, they are taught to give practical effect to their instructions, under the direction of teachers previously trained in the Normal School. The Model Schools are designed to be the *model* for all the public schools in the Province. The buildings were erected by Government in 1852, and the grounds occupy an entire square of more than seven acres. The whole cost of the buildings and site was about \$125,000. The buildings and premises are by far the most commodious and elegant of the kind in America.

The main building is 184 feet long and 84 feet deep, and the extreme height of the cupola is 95 feet. The arrangement of rooms is such that the male and female students are entirely separated, except when in the presence of one of the teachers. More than half of the lower floor is occupied by the rooms of the "Education Office" and the "Map and Public Library Depository."

The pupils of the Normal Schools are divided into two classes, and the lectures and other instructions are given chiefly by Thomas J. Robertson, Esq., and Rev. William Ormiston. These gentlemen had both been distinguished for their scholarship and ability before engaging in the school at Toronto, and they have shown themselves fully equal to the duties they are now called to discharge. Those who attended the recent meetings of the New York State Teachers' Association, enjoyed the privilege of hearing an off-hand speech from Mr. Ormiston, and it is no disparagement to others to say that it was not excelled by any similar effort during the sessions. Whenever we have occasion again to refer to a speaker who illustrates the *vehement* in style, we shall name the Rev. William Ormiston.

Much of the instruction in the Normal School is given in the form of familiar lectures, but the examinations of the pupils are thorough and searching. The number of pupils in attendance at the time of our visit was about eighty, but this is considerably less than the usual attendance. The course of instruction extends through two half-yearly terms, and embraces both common and higher branches of English study. The course appears to be less strictly professional than in several of the Normal Schools in the United States. Less time is devoted in the Normal department to the theory and practice of teaching; but this deficiency is in a great degree supplied by the extensive practice required in the Model Schools, under the direction of competent and experienced guides.

The Model Schools are more extensive and complete in their arrangements than any in the United States, unless we except the Model Schools at New Britain, Conn., which are unquestionably the best we have. The number of scholars attending the Model Schools at Toronto is about 400.

The business of the "Education Office" furnishes full employment for the Chief Superintendent and his Deputy, with some three or four clerks. The Journal of Education is issued from this office monthly, under the direction of Dr. Ryerson, assisted by the Deputy Superintendent, J. George Hodgins, Esq.

Another important branch of the establishment is the "Apparatus, Map, and Library Depository." An extensive assortment of works in the various departments of literature and science, is kept constantly on hand, and schools and libraries

are supplied at cost throughout the Province. The books furnished by this Depository to the public libraries, amount to nearly 100,000 volumes annually.

It may, perhaps, aid in forming an idea of the amount of business transacted by the Department of Public Instruction, to state that the number of letters received by its several branches, amounts to about 500 a month.

At the head of the whole system, are the Council of Public Instruction and the Chief Superintendent of Schools, both appointed by the Crown.

POPULAR ASTRONOMY FOR THE PRESENT MONTH.

IT would be unwise to attempt the introduction of Astronomy as a branch of study in all our District Schools; but every teacher should possess a general knowledge of this subject, and be able, at least, to point out the most conspicuous of the planets and constellations to his pupils. A few simple oral exercises will be sufficient to enlist the interest of a school, without any interruption of the regular classes; and, if a teacher can meet his pupils on two or three favorable evenings, they will readily learn the names and positions of twenty or more constellations, and of all the larger planets and first magnitude stars that are above the horizon. Most pupils will succeed in tracing constellations in the heavens without any other aid than Burritt's Atlas, after three or four have been first pointed out to them. As the planets are constantly changing their positions, it may be necessary for the teacher to refer occasionally to the American Almanac, and observe their declination and time of southing.

November is one of the most favorable months in the year for observing the heavenly bodies, and we will glance at some of the more prominent objects that present themselves to view.

The planet Mercury never goes far enough from the Sun to pass out of the twilight, and is seldom seen by the naked eye. He will reach his greatest elongation (apparent distance from the Sun) about the 20th of the month, and may be seen for a few mornings, if the weather is perfectly clear, about an hour and a half in advance of the Sun.

The planet Venus is now Morning Star. She will reach her greatest brilliancy on the 6th, and may be readily seen by the naked eye when the Sun is above the horizon, any clear day during the first half of the month. The most convenient method of finding Venus during the day, is first to observe her about sunrise and mark her position, by bringing her into a line with

some elevated object. Taking the same position half an hour later she will again be found without difficulty, when her exact position should be marked as before. In this way she may be carried forward so as to be seen, in the clearest days, several hours after sunrise. On the 5th and 6th of the month, Venus will be near the Moon, and may be easily found during the day, by first observing her relative position early in the morning. Through any ordinary telescope or spy-glass, Venus will present a narrow crescent during the first part of the month, gradually widening as the month advances. By the 11th of December, the disk will be half illuminated, and appear like a half Moon.

Mars is now Morning Star, and rises soon after midnight.

Jupiter will be easily recognized from his superior brilliancy. He passes the meridian early in the evening. The satellites of Jupiter may be seen through a telescope of very moderate power. Any one possessing a telescope of not less than two feet focal length, will be able to observe the eclipses of the satellites very satisfactorily. The times when they occur may be found by referring to the American Almanac, or to any Nautical Almanac for the year that is accessible. In the course of the month, there will be eight or ten of these eclipses at convenient hours for observation. Jupiter is in the constellation Capricornus the first half of the month, and in Aquarius the last half.

Saturn is in the constellation Gemini. He rises early in the evening, and is visible through the night. The ring of Saturn is now favorably situated for observation, but it requires a telescope of not less than two and a half feet focal length to show it to advantage. The division of the ring requires a still larger instrument. Saturn is now moving westward among the fixed stars, but this motion is only apparent. It is occasioned by the motion of the Earth in an opposite direction.

The planet Herschel is situated in the constellation Aries, but it is not easily seen by the naked eye.

The spots on the Sun are objects of interest to those who are able to observe them through a telescope. An instrument of moderate power will exhibit them very satisfactorily; but the eye must be carefully protected by stained glass. These spots are much more common at some periods than at others. In keeping a journal of observations made during the years 1845 and 1846, we found the spots very abundant throughout both years. There were comparatively few days in the whole period when the Sun was entirely free from spots, and the number observed often rose to 20 or 30 at a time. Their appearance has recently been much less frequent. At the time of the present writing, October 23, there are two spots visible, which have just made their appearance on the eastern limb of the Sun.

The following simple directions may be of service to teachers who are not already familiar with the constellations. With the aid of a map of the heavens, or celestial globe, they will enable any one to trace without difficulty the principal constellations that are visible during the month. We will suppose the observations to be made about the middle of the month, and at eight or nine o'clock in the evening; though a difference of one or two weeks will not materially change the general aspect of the heavens.

Ursa Major, the constellation containing the Great Dipper, is situated in the north, and near the horizon. The two right hand stars of the Dipper are nearly in a line with the Pole Star, and are hence called the Pointers. The Pole Star is in the constellation Ursa Minor, which contains the Little Dipper. Polaris is the last star in the handle, and the bowl is on the left of it, and a little lower down. Cassiopeia, containing the Chair, is a little N. of the zenith. Andromeda is S. of Cassiopeia, and nearly in the zenith. Its three principal stars are nearly in a straight line. This constellation contains a remarkable nebula, which, in the absence of the Moon, is faintly visible to the naked eye. Auriga, containing Capella, a star of the first magnitude, is in the N.E., and about half way from the horizon to the zenith. Taurus is in the E., two or three hours high. It contains Aldebaran, which is a red star of the first magnitude, and the Pleiades. Castor and Pollux, in the constellation Gemini, are just rising in the N.E.; and Orion, the most brilliant constellation in the heavens, is just rising in the E. Perseus and the Head of Medusa, are situated between Taurus and Cassiopeia. Algol, a remarkable variable star, is found in the Head of Medusa. The constellation Pegasus (Flying Horse) is a little S. of the zenith. It contains a large Square or Table, which is made by four stars of the second magnitude. The Dolphin is a small constellation, situated a little S. of W., and about half way from the horizon to the zenith. Its four principal stars, all of the third magnitude, form a regular Lozenge, which is sometimes called Job's Coffin. Cygnus (the Swan) is in the W., a little more than half way from the horizon to the zenith. It contains a conspicuous Cross. Lyra (the Harp) is a little nearer the horizon, and a little farther N. It contains the brilliant star Vega. Altair, in the Eagle, is in the S.W., about a third of the distance from the horizon to the zenith. It is between the first and second magnitudes. Fromalhaut, in the Southern Fish, is another star a little below the first magnitude. It is just W. of S., and near the horizon. Aquarius (the Water-bearer) is two or three hours past the meridian, and less than half way from the horizon to the zenith. It has four small stars in the Urn, forming the letter Y. Cetus (the Whale) is a large constellation,

E. of S., nearer the horizon than the zenith, and extending from Aquarius to Taurus. Aries is situated N. of the eastern extremity of Cetus, and directly W. of Taurus.

We need in the United States an almanac, or other periodical, containing a popular account of the bodies of our own system throughout the year. Astronomy is now extensively introduced into the higher grade of schools, and telescopes of considerable power have multiplied rapidly during the last twenty years. There are thousands of teachers and learners who would be able, by the aid of such a guide, to follow the motions of the heavenly bodies with interest. The best work we now have of the kind, is the American Almanac; but the part in this devoted to popular Astronomy is exceedingly meagre, especially since the Astronomical department passed out of the hands of Mr. R. T. Paine. The Illustrated London Almanac meets this demand more fully than any other work, and several hundred copies are imported annually by Redding & Co., of Boston, and others, to answer the calls on this side of the Atlantic.

SELF-DEPENDENCE.

THE two great objects of intellectual education, are mental discipline and the acquisition of knowledge. The highest and most important of these objects is mental discipline, or the power of using the mind to the best advantage. The price of this discipline is effort. No man yet ever made intellectual progress without intellectual labor. It is this alone that can strengthen and invigorate the noble faculties with which we are endowed.

However much we may regret that we do not live a century later, because we cannot have the benefit of the improvements that are to be made during the next hundred years; of one thing we may rest assured, that intellectual eminence will be attained during the twentieth century just as it is in the nineteenth,—by the “labor of the brain.” We are not to look for any new discovery or invention that shall supersede the necessity of mental toil; we are not to desire it. If we had but to supplicate some kind genius, and he would at once endow us with all the knowledge in the universe, the gift would prove a curse to us, and not a blessing. We must have the discipline of acquiring knowledge, and in the manner established by the Author of our being. Without this discipline, our intellectual stores would be worse than useless.

The general law of intellectual growth is manifestly this:—whatever may be the mental power which we at any time possess, it requires a repetition of mental efforts, equal in degree to

those which we have put forth before, to prevent actual deterioration. Every considerable step of advance from this point, must be by a new and still higher intellectual performance.

There are many impediments in the path of the student which it is desirable to remove ; but he who attempts to remove all difficulties, or as many of them as possible, wars against the highest law of intellectual development. There cannot be a more fatal error in education, than that of a teacher who adopts the sentiment, that his duty requires him to render the daily tasks of his pupils as easy as possible.

There is, perhaps, no error in our schools at the present time, more deeply seated or more widely extended, than the ruinous practice of aiding pupils in doing work which it is all-important they should do for themselves. Our progress in the art of cultivating habits of earnest, independent thought, has not kept pace with our improvements in other departments of education. Familiar explanations, and illustrations, and simplifications, and dilutions, too often spare the pupil the labor of thinking for himself, and thus dwarf the intellect, and defeat the highest object for which our schools are established.

To secure from a pupil the solution of a difficult problem, will often cost time which the teacher can ill afford ; it may often cost more effort to secure a solution from the pupil, than it costs the pupil to do the work. The pupil has tried the problem, and satisfied himself that he is not able to solve it. The teacher may be satisfied that the pupil can perform it, but if he cannot make the pupil think so too, it will be difficult to bring his best energies to bear upon it ; and even after the pupil is persuaded that he is able to accomplish the task, it may still be necessary for the teacher to adopt special measures to set the pupil's mind at work. The pupil may have the ability to solve the problem ; he may believe that he has this ability, and he may have a willing mind ; and, after all, fail entirely of doing it. And this brings to view what must be regarded as the highest gift of the teacher ; namely, the ability to teach his pupils how to think and act, without doing their thinking and acting for them.

A scholar had become discouraged over a difficult question. He had gone through the solution again and again, but could not obtain the answer sought. Availing himself of a favorable opportunity, the teacher requested the pupil to go through the work slowly and carefully in his presence. As the pupil proceeded, the teacher required him to explain each step of the process ; and when he reached the point where his previous error occurred, as the teacher asked him to give his reason, the pupil's eye flashed with delight, and he exclaimed, "I see my error." Without farther assistance he soon reached a correct result. The teacher had not furnished the slightest hint in re-

spect to the solution of the problem. He had only taken measures which brought the pupil's own strength to bear upon it. There are, however, peculiar cases which no such method will reach. The pupil may be required to repeat his solution a hundred times; in the presence of the teacher or alone; with reasons, or without; and all to no purpose. The result, if he reaches one, is sure to be wrong. It is not time, even now, for the teacher to give over in despair. Let him ask the pupil such questions as will call to mind the principles which he has occasion to apply, and, in a majority of cases, the pupil will need no further aid.

The same end may usually be gained, by giving the pupil an example involving the difficulty over which he has stumbled, but less complicated in other respects; or, by giving him several examples, leading gradually to the main obstacle to be overcome. We believe the cases are exceedingly rare in which minds properly disciplined would ever be benefited by direct assistance, in an ordinary course of mathematical study. But if it be thought best, in extreme cases, to afford this assistance, let the pupil, by all means, be required to repeat the process, after the teacher's work has been entirely erased; and thus derive, at least, the benefit of reproducing, though he has not the power to originate.

The teacher will find it a highly useful exercise, to give his pupils an occasional *model of thinking*. Let him take a problem to the blackboard, and *think aloud* as he proceeds with the solution; so that the pupils may witness the action of the teacher's mind, and observe the questions he asks himself, and the various associations and comparisons that arise, as he advances from step to step in the process.

Let us not be misunderstood in the views we have expressed. We believe that the first germs of knowledge must come from without and not from within; and, therefore, that very much of the knowledge acquired by younger classes of learners must be directly imparted by teachers and others. There are many branches of learning which we must all derive, in a greater or less degree, from teachers and books. The treasures of knowledge that have been accumulating for nearly six thousand years, are not to be rejected nor lightly esteemed. They are a precious inheritance; but he who depends upon *these alone*, will find that his riches are little better than shadows.

But there are other departments of study, in which the value of our acquisitions depends almost entirely upon the action of our own minds; and it is upon these branches that we depend, in a great degree, for intellectual growth. Here, then, we would apply most rigidly the rule—

“Never do for a pupil what he is capable of doing for himself.”

SELF-EDUCATION.

[There is no principle which we are more anxious to impress on the minds of teachers than that which we have attempted to embody in our article on Self-Dependence. The following remarks by Bishop Potter, relate to a kindred subject. We have introduced them in this connection because we wish to avail ourselves of his authority, and because they are distinguished for their intrinsic value and importance.—ED.]

If I were to reduce to a single maxim the concentrated wisdom of the world, on the subject of practical education, I should but enunciate a proposition, which I think will command your assent, but which, I fear, is not incorporated, as it should be, into the practice of schools and families. That principle is, that in educating the young you serve them most effectually, not by what you do for them, but by what you teach them to do for themselves. This is the secret of all educational development. We talk of self-education as if it were an anomaly. In one sense of the word, all education is obtained simply by the exertion of our own minds. And is this self-education? What does education mean? Not *induction*. The popular opinion seems to be that education is putting something *into* the mind of a child by exercising merely its power of receptivity—its memory. I say nay, nay, nay. The great principle on which a child should be educated is, not that of reception, but rather of action, and it will ever remain uneducated, in the highest sense, so long as its higher mental powers remain inert. One man may lead a horse to water, but twenty cannot make him drink—and yet, if he does not drink, he dies. So a boy or girl may be supplied with all the materials of education, and yet remain uneducated until the end of time. Moses struck the rock, and the waters gushed forth. When it is proposed to apply a force to inorganic matter, the force, not being within itself, must be applied externally, or it must change its internal constitution like chemical action. But when we pass to the living soul, we find the organizing, energizing force within, and all our skill must be directed to the development of this germ of a true moral and spiritual life. In Vienna, the government says to the populace, “Go to the opera, go to masquerades, attend theatres, waltz and game,—in short, devote yourselves to pleasure or to sensuality, but don’t talk of government, we will attend to that.” Do you not see that a people who submit to this cannot be a nation of free-men, and that the skill is all but infernal with which such a government lays its hands on the seat of life, and arrests the action of the heart? Such a policy must be revised before a nation can be free. When young Hercules was to be trained to noble deeds, he was not put to bed, but

cast out where he must fight with the elements, with monsters—and so it was because our forefathers toiled manfully to support their families—drive the wolf and red man from their doors—going with muskets on their shoulders to the halls of the colonial legislature, that they were not pliant tools like the Austrians—that, in a word, they were what they were, and we to-night are what we are.

Many teachers, now-a-days, ask questions in the very words of their books, *ipsissimis verbis*. The children, too, are required to answer in the precise words of the book, and the questions generally are what the lawyers call *leading* questions, so that the pupil has as little thinking to do as possible. But how should questions be put to children? In such a way, if possible, as to compel them to think. Therefore, a good teacher will not give them in the language of the text-book, but will translate them out of it, so as to get the kernel from the chaff, and to fasten the attention of his pupils on *things*, not on *words* and *names*. How many modern teachers make answering questions by rote, their first and last duty—their Alpha and Omega. They do not fulfil their highest office as educators, even of the intellect, until they set the soul to thinking, and unless they keep it thinking always. On the same principle teachers should not, it seems to me, be too ready to help their pupils to answers. This is precisely like putting crutches under a child after it is able to walk; knock them away—cut away the bladders when the child is learning to swim and leave him to himself. Life is a scene for action and inquiry—questions crowd on us daily, and in the work-day world, whither the child is going, and where he is to wrestle manfully, he will have no text-books to supply a mechanical answer. Speak, then, to your pupil from the promptings of a full mind, and you will speak well and wisely. I am sometimes tempted to ask what text-books were made for, and what effect it would have if they were all burned up some day, or what would be the predicament of some teachers if they had to answer all these questions themselves, instead of finding those answers ready made at the bottom of the pages. Away, then, with such clumsy devices. Let the teacher so prepare himself that he can speak with his eye as well as with his tongue, with his hand, his beaming face, and every muscle of his frame—not simply with averted eye and vacant face read over questions propounded for him in a text-book.

[For the Massachusetts Teacher.]

PAYSON & DUNTON'S REVISED SERIES OF WRITING BOOKS.

A WRITER in the July number of the "Teacher," in an article headed "The Duntonian System of Rapid Writing," has made some strictures upon the "Remarks and Hints to Teachers" appended to Payson & Dunton's Revised Series of Writing Books, which were published in a recent number of the "Teacher." The subject of penmanship, and the principles which it involves, were there, from want of space, but very briefly discussed, and the writer of the "Remarks" would have welcomed from any quarter further light upon the question as to what constitutes good writing, and what are the best means for attaining it; but though the writer in the July number heads his article as we have indicated above, his statements are chiefly negative, and consist in questioning the correctness of the positions taken in our "Hints to Teachers." This has been done too carelessly to entitle the strictures to much importance; since, if a writer is to be made to argue against himself, it is not asking too much to be quoted exactly. We will designate the writer in question as C., if he will pardon the liberty, since this will greatly serve our convenience, in the absence of any signature to the article.

Witness now, whether our statement concerning C.'s misquoting is too strong. We will first quote from the "Remarks." "The books belonging to this series, five in number, are intended to be a compromise between the old-fashioned round hand, and the more modern, angular, and open style of writing. The former, *though it often leads* to the acquisition of a strong, rapid, and graceful style of penmanship, is justly objected to as being, in general, too formal and labored for practical use. Its highest claim to be retained as a standard, is the distinctness and great legibility which are sure to characterize the style of those penmen who have been thoroughly trained upon this system. On the other hand, the modern angular system, with scarcely any shade lines, with many unnecessary turns and sweeps of the pen, which deform the letters and impair the legibility of the writing, is even more (not 'now') objectionable, though it unquestionably allows the pupil greater freedom of movement." This is the way C. represents it. "The Remarks and Hints," above referred to, however, while they declare that the old-fashioned round hand is too formal for practical use, yet make out a case against their own as well as the angular system. "Round hand leads," they declare, "to a strong, rapid, and graceful style of penmanship. Its highest claim to be retained as a standard, is the

distinctness and great legibility which are sure to characterize the style of those penmen who have been thoroughly trained upon this system." Again say the "Remarks," "We value legibility the most, and for this reason," &c. "If, then, the old-fashioned round hand forms a strong, rapid, and graceful style, distinct and greatly legible, and if, as they allege, the two latter qualities *are sure* to follow the practice of this system, why present to the public a system declared to be a compromise between this excellent system, and one, the angular, which the 'Remarks' declare is even now [more] objectionable?"

In the language of the "Remarks," as we have quoted them above, we do not assert, unqualifiedly, that the round hand leads always to a rapid style of writing; that legibility and distinctness are sure to accompany the essential quality, rapidity; and then commit the absurdity of proposing a new series which claims to effect no more. We distinctly, and, we believe, fairly, state the merits and the defects of the two systems; and the compromise consists in correcting the formality of the round hand without sacrificing its essential excellence, legibility; and in adopting so much of the angular principle, as to secure greater freedom of movement, without encouraging an excessively open, and, therefore, illegible style. Both the round hand and the angular are objectionable. Both must give way to a system which secures, together with distinctness and legibility, rapidity of execution. Arguing from the brief statement above, the necessity of a change, and condemning the angular system even when "taught by the best teacher in Boston," whoever may be indicated by that designation, as a vicious system, leading to mischievous results in a majority of cases, we propose a new system; one which shall be founded upon the old method of teaching,—which we regard as fundamentally correct,—and which shall be free from the charge of formality to which the old system was liable. How is this compromise effected? By presenting to the pupils forms obviously drawn from the old models, but modified essentially by the angular quality adopted from the new.

Leaving, for the present, C.'s strictures, which we believe to be good-natured, though hasty, we wish to state more fully than we were able in the "Remarks," some of our views concerning the art of penmanship.

Writing is an *imitative art*, which requires a careful and exact training. The eye and the hand, the taste and the judgment, are constantly employed in producing the desired result, until the hand has attained a cunning which enables it to execute, almost mechanically, every required movement. We mean that volition becomes so rapid that the execution seems, after long practice, to be but the habit of the hand. We will take, in illustration, a couplet from Pope, a little farther on in the *Essay* from which C. quotes;

"True ease in writing comes from art, not chance,
As those move easiest who have learned to dance."

affixing to "writing" the technical meaning which is often assigned to it. This *art* is partly mechanical and partly a mental operation. At first, the mental operation needs as much to be watched over and aided as the mechanical operation of the hand; indeed, much more. You give a child a letter to imitate. What is the process which the task involves? He observes the character, but not with the practised eye, the taste and judgment of a penman. He then attempts to put into form and outline his own idea of the letter. The result is a feeble abortion. He tries again and again. His teacher will tell him, we think, if he is judicious, to do this slowly, until he is quite successful. Those who have had much experience in teaching young children will credit the assertion, that it will generally require two or three years' training, before the fifty-two characters of the large and small alphabets are mastered. Hurrying only retards the child's progress. After he has learned by long and careful painstaking to imitate these forms, he then learns to combine them; to exercise his judgment in spacing the characters; to discern the fitness of their relative lengths and proportions; and to preserve carefully an exact parallelism in their formation. In the "Revised Series," therefore, we have discarded all unmeaning and useless additions, even to the "graceful turns of closing letters," which C. says we "should not refer to." We have endeavored to present a severe and simple style of penmanship in all the copies, with no turns or sweeps to any of the letters, which are not necessary to give them grace, balance and firmness. We have endeavored rigidly to carry out this principle in all the details of the system, for this reason; that the mind becomes habituated to the forms at first presented; the habit becomes more and more fixed by practice, and unless the characters are such as are to be employed when facility of execution is acquired, a false standard is inculcated, and errors of taste and style adhere to the penman through all his after practice in life. We do not, therefore, teach our pupils an excessively angular system; we do not encourage them by set exercises to spread out their handwriting; we do not tell them to curl up their final letters for the sake of freedom of movement; we do not set them g's and f's, and other looped letters, extravagantly long, for the sake of encouraging the free motion of the hand; trusting that they will *afterwards* learn to condense their style, lop off the excrescences, and abbreviate the tails of their letters. These things C. will find carefully taught in the system which he advocates. C., doubtless, thinks all this is right. We entirely differ from him on this point; and we are willing to let teachers

practically decide the question, by adopting that system which favors their own views.

"The angular system has, for a few years past," says C., "been undergoing modifications, which have rendered it what it is at the present time, the most *elegant, rapid*, and legible style that can be devised." We have before us a specimen of this style, which purports to be a fac-simile of the author's handwriting, "for practical purposes," and, as he takes pains to call our particular attention to it by the unmistakable direction, "Please keep this in sight," we judge it to be a fair subject for criticism, regarding it as the exponent of C.'s views. We pronounce it, unhesitatingly, an *illegible* style of writing, without considering the other epithets which C. would apply to it. *The eye is compelled to go slowly from one word to another; whereas the reader of what may be justly characterized as legible penmanship, may take in the words of a whole line at a single glance.*

For the sake of explaining more fully how important we regard the arm and finger movements, we beg leave to refer the reader to the remarks on the subject in the April number of the "Teacher." We thought that the nature of the exercises on these movements was there plainly enough indicated to guide the teacher in his instruction. This mechanical training is intended to be complementary to that taught in the Revised Series; and, on the covers of the later issues of the books, teachers will find, we believe, all that is needed to guide them in directing this part of their pupils' training. We repeat our directions in the "Remarks." "Let these two movements, then, constantly *accompany* the practice necessary in going through this series of writing books, and teachers may be assured that, whatever is done in the way of instruction, be it more or less, will be done in the right direction:" inasmuch as the pupil will have no forms, no extravagances, no vicious habits, no bad taste, taught by the system, to *unlearn*. What he learns in Number One he need never unlearn. He finds the same thing in Number Five: and if he continually reproduces these forms in his after writing,—a result which his training is designed to accomplish, and which we know from experience will follow from it,—we ask for no better proof of the excellence of the system.

We wish, in closing our remarks, to make a few comments upon the opening periods of C.'s article. He discourses thus. "Much time and great expense have always been, and still are, bestowed on chirography in our common schools. It is a branch of instruction second in rank but to the art of reading, and deserves all the attention which has been given to it. *It embraces, indeed, more of the principles of social benevolence than the art of reading: for it implies the exercise of the power of imparting knowledge to others, while reading is rather the means of self-*

gratification and improvement. Hence, nothing gives the true teacher more satisfaction than any improvement or discovery, which may aid him in imparting to his pupils the elements of this noble art ; *the art of giving to thought a form and substance that are impressed on the minds of succeeding ages.*" This is partly true ; but, we venture to express the doubt, whether so much time has been of late years devoted to this practical acquirement, a good handwriting, as its importance really demands. We think, on the contrary, that it has been too much neglected for other things ; in short, that it has been, in very many schools throughout New England, most wretchedly taught, if it can be said to have been taught at all.

Formerly in Boston, and in many other places, men were selected to teach the art, who at least were accomplished penmen ; and probably thrice as much time, to speak entirely within bounds, was given to the study, as is now generally assigned to it. The result was, in a large proportion of cases, a style of writing such as we rarely see now-a-days, excepting when the training has been of an unusual character. We meet with ready penmen ; but their style is too ornate, far less legible than the old one, and, in most respects, a poor substitute for it. The excellent remarks of the Hon. Edward Everett, in his late happy address at the School Festival in Faneuil Hall, point to this fact. Take as an example of the old style the round handwriting of Washington, Franklin, and many of the American Revolutionary officers ; and we should be very grateful to those "mediums," who take such shameless liberties with the spirits of these departed great men, if they would only conjure back their handwriting once more, and thus turn their professed spiritual associations to some practical account.

For many years it has been the practice, and is now, to select a teacher for his *general* ability ; and his style of penmanship is, perhaps, one of the last things thought of, if it is regarded at all. This is as it should be ; for there are other considerations of greater importance to be weighed : the moral and intellectual character, the scholarship, experience, and education of the candidate. It is, then, of great importance that a system of penmanship should be employed, which is easy to teach, and which will be likely to be successful in the hands of non-professional writing-masters ; and under the instruction of the inexperienced teachers of the art, who, it is safe say, will, in a large majority of cases, make use of it.

The Revised Series is founded upon the experience of many years' teaching. The gradation of the exercises corresponds to the practice which we have followed, during all this time, in teaching writing in a large school, only under very unfavorable auspices ; inasmuch as we were forced to *write* all the copies, or slips,

for a numerous corps of assistant teachers. But the result of this method of teaching was such as to make us confident that it was founded upon correct and philosophical principles. And one of the strongest recommendations of the system, it is believed, will be found in the fact, that better results will follow from this kind of training, even under ordinary penmen, than from that of any other system that has been offered to the public. That system which fails in the hands of most teachers, whatever merits may be claimed for it, can never meet with any great favor, after the fact of its failure has been fully established. Thus one system after another has been tried and found wanting. We confidently submit the Revised Series to this test of its real value and superiority over other systems of penmanship.

W.

[From the Ohio Journal of Education.]

[The following extract is taken from an article over the signature of M. F. C. Mr. M. F. Cowdery, Superintendent of Schools at Sandusky, has long been distinguished as one of the best educators in Ohio, and the sentiments here expressed are worthy of their origin.—ED.]

THERE is often a very great error committed in allowing any of the exercises of the school to proceed while the order is in any degree below the proper standard. Let every teacher, on the first day and first hour, and on all succeeding hours and days, see that there is just the right standard of quiet and order before any exercise is commenced, and let any and every exercise be promptly and entirely suspended unless this standard is maintained. But, how long should the teacher wait for quiet to be restored? The spirit of our advice on this point may be gathered from the following reply of an Eastern Railroad Superintendent to the conductor of a train: “How long shall I wait at —— station for the *up* train?”—“Wait, sir, until the *axletrees of your car-wheels have rusted off*; then get a new supply, and wait till *they* rust off.” So, let the teacher wait until the solid walls of his school-room shall crumble to decay, before proceeding with any sort of exercises in a disorderly school. Neither reading nor spelling, algebra nor philosophy, are matters of such infinite consequence that they are to be taught at the expense of martyrdom of every thing else valuable. But we have one method to suggest, by way of securing and maintaining this order, and we then dismiss the topic. It is the imperative, never-ceasing duty of the teacher to provide every child with *something to do*. All of the study-hours of each class, with the *specific time* set for the preparation of each lesson, should be most carefully and judiciously arranged by

each teacher. It is idle to expect that the simple announcement of a lesson to young children will be sufficient to insure its proper proportion of attention, in comparison with, and in connection with, all other duties and lessons. It is, indeed, scarcely safe to leave this to the option of the older pupils in any school. If not absolutely required, the practice should be very strongly recommended, to the most mature students, to have *fixed hours* for preparation for each recitation. With all the younger pupils, we regard this, in connection with what has been previously said respecting communications, as a sort of *starting-point* to future success.

[For the Massachusetts Teacher.]

PUNCTUALITY.

PUNCTUALITY signifies scrupulous exactness in the discharge of duty at the appointed time.

Is it important for duty to be performed at the time appointed for it? Let us turn to Nature for an answer—let us see what principle governs in her works.

Have you never heard of Plato, who, as one says, “was the divinest of the souls that knew not God”? He caught in the silent hours of the night the music of the spheres. Yes, there fell on his deeply-listening ear, that beautiful, grand, sublime harmony of the heavenly bodies; sphere circling about sphere, system about system, and so on and on, till no fixed centre is found, save the Throne of the Eternal; all regular, orderly, harmonious, “*keeping time*.” Not one ever fails, but all with tireless movement press onward in their courses.

Whoever knew the sun, moon, or stars to rise after their appointed time? The Astronomer can tell us the precise moment when each will ascend the Eastern horizon, attain the meridian, and finally sink in the West; and we are never anxious lest they should not be in their places *in time*, for they are *punctual*.

The seasons come and go at their appointed time; we know when the trees shall clothe themselves in green, and when our hearts shall leap for joy at the blossoming of flowers; we know, when from far, the birds shall come to cheer us with their songs. The mighty ocean too, at his appointed time, moves towards the land, yet we fear not that we shall be overwhelmed, for, punctual to the time, he will retire. So through the realm of Nature, if we explore, we shall learn, that from the smallest atom to the mightest world, each punctual to its duty, thus fulfills its Maker’s will; and so, throughout her wide domain, order and beauty ever reign.

But how shall teachers instruct their pupils to be punctual? Talk to them of Nature, talk till they *feel* the harmony

that exists in her works ; tell them that to be punctual is her *law, never broken* ; talk till their hearts respond beautiful, beautiful ; and till their *voices* shall be ready to break forth in harmony with the music of the spheres. Children love to hear of nature ; of the flowers, trees, birds, brooks, rivers, hills, mountains, and the stars. While talking of these things your scholars will be very silent ; their eyes will sparkle with delight, and their looks will be intently fixed upon you ; and thus gaining their *hearts, impress* them ; stamp the sacred seal of duty there. God has prepared their hearts to receive the seed that you, as teachers, are bound to sow. Their minds are young and plastic, and you can mould and train them as you will.

Teach them to conform their *lives* to this beautiful law of Nature, promptness in the discharge of duty at the appointed time, whether it is, that they be in their places at the hour when school begins, or that they be regular in their attendance, prompt in the preparations of their lessons, or whatever the duty is, teach them that it is a *part* of the duty to perform it in its time.

To incite still more to the discharge of this duty, you can bring before their minds examples of the great and good who were adorned with this virtue. Teach them that *punctuality* had much to do towards making them great. And teachers, you must yourselves, in this respect, be *perfect patterns*, for your pupils to copy.

Keeping a record of attendance has a great influence in securing punctuality in schools ; and a few kind words to parents on the necessity of punctuality in order to the greatest improvement of their children, will do much good. But I think the teacher should rely, in a great degree, upon the faithful instruction he can give his pupils on the importance of punctuality, enforced by a good example.

M. L. B.

NORMAL TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION.

THE first Normal Teachers' Meeting in the United States, was held at New York, on the 30th of August last. A strong desire had been felt, that those whose department of instruction is so peculiar, should enjoy an opportunity to exchange views on various practical questions relating to the education of teachers. The call was responded to very heartily, and Normal Schools were represented at the meeting, from New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island. It was decided unanimously to form an Association of Normal Teachers, and to meet as often as once a year for the purpose of mutual improvement in the art of teaching teachers.

WRITTEN EXAMINATIONS.

FREQUENT written reviews are among the most successful means that teachers can employ for securing thoroughness and accuracy of scholarship. Several topics are written distinctly on the blackboard, and the pupils are required to expand them as fully and accurately as possible. Each pupil is seated by himself, and furnished with pen and paper; but receives no assistance, direct or indirect, from either teacher or text-book. This mode of examining a class accomplishes at least three important objects at the same time. It affords a thorough test of the pupil's knowledge of the subject; it is one of the best methods of cultivating freedom and accuracy in the use of language; and it furnishes a valuable discipline to the pupil's mind, by throwing him entirely on his own resources. The task of examining so many separate written exercises, and of estimating their value, increases the labor of the teacher, but the gain to the pupil is more than an equivalent for the extra service required.

LIPPINCOTT'S PRONOUNCING GAZETTEER OF THE WORLD. By THOMAS & BALDWIN.

THERE are now so many Gazetteers before the public that a repeatable work may be prepared with very little labor beyond the trouble of transcribing. The publishers of the present work have hazarded the experiment of incurring heavy expenditures in collecting a vast amount of new information from original sources, and in making a fresh survey of the whole field of geographical orthography and pronunciation. It is, perhaps, doubtful whether this work will *pay* so well as one prepared at less expense; but those who have any just appreciation of the labor bestowed upon it, and of the improvements which it embodies, will feel that the public, and especially schools, are under great obligation to the publishers for issuing it in so complete a form. It may very properly assume the title, "Geographical Dictionary;" for, in its plan and execution, it approaches, in some good degree, to the comprehensiveness and accuracy of the best dictionaries of the English language. It contains the most recent and authentic information respecting all parts of the world; and its value as a pronouncing gazetteer will be obvious to all who have ever had occasion to attempt the pronunciation of difficult foreign names. If a copy of this work could be placed in every district school in the land, and studied in connection with the daily exercises in Geography, the increased intelligence of our youth would show a better dividend on the capital invested than any bank or railroad report that has ever been issued.

VENTILATION.

IN the process of respiration a full grown man draws into his chest about 20 cubic inches of air ; only one-fifth of this is oxygen, and nearly one-half of this oxygen is converted into carbonic acid. Now, allowing fifteen inspirations per minute for a man, he will vitiate about three hundred cubic inches, or nearly one-sixth of a cubic foot of atmospheric air, and this, by mingling as it escapes with several times as much, renders at least two cubic feet of air unfit for respiration. Now the removal of this impure air, and the bringing in of a constant fresh supply, have been provided for by nature in the most perfect manner, and it is by our ill-contrived, artificial arrangements that the provision is defeated. The expired and vitiated air, as it leaves the chest, is heated to very near the temperature of the body, viz., 98°, and being expanded by the heat, is specifically lighter than the surrounding air at any ordinary temperature ; it therefore ascends and escapes to a higher level, by the colder air pushing it up as it does a balloon. The place of this heated air is constantly supplied by the colder and denser air closing in on all sides. In the open air the process is perfect, because there is nothing to prevent the escape of the vitiated air ; but, in a close apartment, the hot air, rising up to the ceiling, is prevented from escaping ; and gradually accumulating and becoming cooler, it descends and mingles with the fresh air, which occupies the lower level. We have thus to inhale an atmosphere which every moment becomes more and more impure and unfit for respiration ; and the impurities become increased much more rapidly by night when lamps or candles, or gas, is burning, for flame is a rapid consumer of oxygen. Under these circumstances, our only chance of escape from suffocation is in the defective workmanship of the house-carpenter ; the crevices in the window frames and doors allow the foul air a partial exit, as may be proved by holding the flame of a candle near the top of a closed door, in a hot room ; it will be seen that the flame is powerfully drawn towards the door in the direction of the out-going current ; and, on holding the flame near the bottom of the door, it will be blown away from the door, showing the direction of the entering current. If we stop up these crevices, by putting list round the windows and doors, so as to make them fit accurately, we only increase the evil. The first effect is, that the fire will not *draw*, for want of sufficient draught ; if the inmates can put up with a dull fire and a smoky atmosphere, they soon become restless and uncomfortable ; young people get fretful and peevish, their elders irritable, respiration becomes impeded, a tight band appears to

be drawn round the forehead, which some invisible hand seems to be drawing tighter and tighter every moment ; the eye-balls ache and throb, a sense of languor succeeds to fits of restless impatience, yawning becomes general, for yawning is nothing more than an effort of nature to get more air into the lungs ; under these circumstances the announcement of tea is a welcome sound, the opening and shutting of the door necessary to its preparation give a vent to the foul air, the stimulus of the meal mitigates the suffering for a time, but before the hour of rest, the same causes of discomfort have been again in active operation, and the family party retires for the night indisposed and out of humor.

But in the bedroom, the inmates are not free from the malignant influence. The closed doors, the curtained bed, and the well-closed windows, are sentinels which jealously guard against the approach of fresh air. The unconscious sleepers, at each respiration, vitiate a portion of air, which, in obedience to the laws of nature, rises to the ceiling, and would escape, if the means of escape were provided ; but, in the absence of this, it soon shakes off those aerial wings which would have carried it away, and, becoming cooler and denser, it descends, and again enters the lungs of the sleepers, who, unconsciously, inhale the poison. When the room has become surcharged with foul air, so that a portion must escape, then, and not till then, does it begin to escape up the chimney. Hence, many persons very properly object to sleeping in a room which is unprovided with a chimney ; but it is evident that such a ventilator is situated too low down to be of much service. If there be no chimney in the room, a portion of the foul air escapes by forcing its way out of some of the cracks and crevices which serve to admit the fresh air.

That this sketch is not overdrawn, must be evident to any one who, after an early morning's walk, may have returned directly from the fresh morning air into the bedroom which he had left closely shut up an hour before. What is more disgusting than the odor of a bedroom in the morning ? Why is it that so many persons get up without feeling refreshment from their sleep ? Why do so many persons pass sleepless nights ? The answers to these and many other similar questions may be frequently found in defective ventilation. How much disease and misery arises from this cause, it would be difficult to state with any approach to accuracy, because the causes of misery are very complicated.

Now, as no person would consent habitually to swallow a small portion of liquid poison, knowing it to be such, though diluted with a very large portion of pure water, so it is equally unwise to consent habitually to inhale a small portion of gaseous

poison, knowing it to be such, though diluted with a very large portion of pure air ; and yet this is what the majority of persons actually do who occupy apartments unprovided with proper ventilating apparatus.—*Tomlinson on Warming and Ventilation.*

NEGLECT OF PHYSICAL TRAINING.

[The following extract is taken from "Letters to the People on Health and Happiness," by *Catharine E. Beecher.*]

My Friends :—Will you let me come to you in your workshop, or office, or store, or study ? and you, my female friends, may I enter your nursery, your parlor, or your kitchen ? I have matters of interest to present in which every one of you has a deep personal concern. I have facts to communicate, that will prove that the American people are pursuing a course, in their own habits and practices, which is destroying health and happiness to an extent that is perfectly appalling. Nay, more, I think I shall be able to show that the majority of parents in this nation are systematically educating the rising generation to be feeble, deformed, homely, sickly, and miserable ; as much so as if it were their express aim to commit so monstrous a folly.

I think I can show also, that if a plan for *destroying female health*, in all the ways in which it could be most effectually done, were drawn up, it would be exactly the course which is now pursued by a large portion of this nation, especially in the more wealthy classes.

At the same time, I can present *facts*, showing that the results of such a course have been an amount of domestic unhappiness, and of individual suffering, in all classes in our land, that is perfectly frightful, and that these dreadful evils are constantly increasing.

You have read often of the Greeks. Some twenty centuries ago they were a small people, in a small country ; and yet they became the wisest and most powerful of all nations, and thus conquered nearly the whole world. And they were remarkable, not only for their wisdom and strength, but for their great beauty, so that the statues they made to resemble their own men and women have, ever since, been regarded as the most perfect forms of human beauty.

The chief reason why they excelled all nations in these respects, was the great care they took in educating their children. They had two kinds of schools—the one to train the minds, and the other to train the bodies of their children. And though they estimated very highly the education of the mind, they still more valued that part of school training which tended to develop and perfect the body.

In the family, too, although the higher classes took care that their children should improve the mind, all, from the highest to the lowest, were earnest in efforts to train the rising generation to have healthy, strong, and beautiful bodies. And when these people met at their national festivals, they not only read or recited history and poetry before these great assemblies, but they still more delighted in games and sports, which exhibited the beauty, strength, gracefulness, and skill of the human body.

But the American people have pursued a very different course. It is true that a large portion of them have provided schools for educating the minds of their children; but instead of providing teachers to train the bodies of their offspring, most of them have not only entirely neglected it, but have done almost everything they could do to train their children to become feeble, sickly, and ugly. And those who have not pursued so foolish a course have taken very little pains to secure the proper education of the body for their offspring during the period of their school life.

In consequence of this dreadful neglect and mismanagement, the children of this country are every year becoming less and less healthful and good-looking. Every year I hear more and more complaints of the poor health that is so very common among grown people, especially among women. And physicians say, that this is an evil that is constantly increasing, so that they fear, ere long, there will be no healthy women in the country.

At the same time, among all classes of our land, we are constantly hearing of the superior health and activity of our ancestors. Their physical health and strength, and their power of labor and endurance, were altogether beyond any thing witnessed in the present generation.

Travellers, when they go to other countries, especially when they visit England, from whence our ancestors came, are struck with the contrast between the appearance of American women and those of other countries, in the matter of health. In this nation, it is rare to see a married woman of thirty or forty, especially in the more wealthy classes, who retains the fulness of person and freshness of complexion that mark good health. But in England, almost all the women are in the full perfection of womanhood at that period of life.

Now, it is a fact, that the health of children depends very much on the health of their parents. Feeble and sickly fathers and mothers seldom have strong and healthy children. And when one parent is well and the other sickly, then a part of the children will be sickly and a part healthy. Thus the more parents become unhealthy the more feeble children will be born. And when these feeble children grow up and become parents,

they will have a still more puny and degenerate offspring. So the case will go on, from bad to worse, with every generation. What then, if what I state be true, are the prospects of this nation, unless some great and radical change is effected?

Such a change is possible. The American people have far better advantages than the Greeks had to train their offspring to be strong, healthful, and beautiful, while the means of *retrieving* the mischief already done are in their hands. Nothing is needed but a *full knowledge* of the case, and then the *application of that practical common sense and efficiency to this object* which secures to them such wonderful success in all their business affairs.

EARLY MENTAL CULTURE.

THE universal admission that success in life and personal consideration depend on intellectual development and extensive knowledge, has led many, in their ignorance of physiological principles, to force mental labor on young children. But, in most cases, both the minds and bodies of the little sufferers have been enfeebled by an over-exertion of the brain, when as yet imperfectly formed. There is nothing more painful to witness than the unnatural disproportion which mental precocity introduces between physical and intellectual life. Parents and teachers have much to answer for, who, regardless of the manifest designs of nature, condemn young children to sedentary occupations, and force intellectual acquirements upon their tender minds, at the risk of unduly exciting the nervous system, injuring the brain, and undermining the constitution. So close is the immediate connection between mind and body, that the former cannot be over-exerted without the latter feeling the baneful effects of the undue excitement.

The most eminent physicians of ancient and modern times proclaim the fatal influence which overstraining the mind of youth has on the health and bodily frame. Of the numerous medical authorities which we could bring forward on this point, we will confine ourselves to one, that of the celebrated Tissot, who says, "Long continued application in childhood destroys life. I have seen young children of great mental activity, who manifested a passion for learning far above their age, and I fore-saw with grief the fate which awaited them; they commenced their career as prodigies, and ended by becoming idiots or persons of very weak minds. * * * No custom is more improper or cruel than that of some parents who require of their children much intellectual labor and great progress in their study. It is the tomb of their talent and their health." Of

those who have survived the direful effects of a premature and exclusive excitement of the mind, few indeed have ever risen to eminence.

The histories of the nations among which classical literature and the sciences have been much cultivated, and which have consequently afforded parents opportunities or inducements to force abstract studies upon their children, abound in facts which prove the truth of these observations. Intellectual precocity is but too frequently attended by premature death or debility through life. The instances are very rare of young genuises having arrived at old age; whilst, on the contrary, many of those whose education began comparatively late, have remained engaged to the end of a long life in the most intensely intellectual labor.

"Experience," says Dr. Spurzheim, "demonstrates, that of any number of children of equal intellectual power, those who receive no particular care in childhood, and who do not learn to read and write until the constitution begins to be consolidated, but who enjoy the benefit of a good physical education, very soon surpass, in their studies, those who commence earlier and read numerous books when very young. The mind ought never to be cultivated at the expense of the body; and physical education ought to precede that of the intellect, and then proceed simultaneously with it, without cultivating one faculty to the neglect of others; for health is the base, and instruction the ornament of education."

Let parents then check, rather than excite in their children, this early disposition to mental activity, or, rather, let them counterbalance it by a due proportion of physical and gymnastic exercises; for it is not so much the intensity as the continuity of the mental action, which is injurious to the constitution. Let them not cause the age of cheerfulness to be spent in the midst of tears and in slavery; let them not change the sunny days of childhood into a melancholy gloom, which can, at best, only be a source of misery and bitter recollection in maturer years.

Physical exercises and the cultivation of the perceptive faculties should, with the reading of moral and instructive books, form the principal occupations of children. Their expanding frame requires the invigorating stimulus of fresh air; their awakening organs seek for external objects of sense; their dawning intellect incessantly calls for the action of their observant powers. This is the great law of Nature. She has given to the child that restless activity, that buoyancy of animal spirits, that prying inquisitiveness, which makes him delight in constant motion and in the observation of new objects. If these wise intentions of Providence be not frustrated; if he be allowed to give himself up to the sportive feelings of his age, he will acquire a healthy

constitution, and a physical and perceptive development, which are the best preparation for mental labor.

Of the men who have conferred benefit on society and have been the admiration of the world, the greater number are those who, from various causes, have in early life been kept from school or from serious study. They have, by energetic and well-directed efforts, at a period when the brain was ready for the task, acquired knowledge, and displayed abilities which have raised them to the highest eminence in the different walks in life, in literature, the arts and sciences, in the army, the senate, the church, and even on the throne. The history of the most distinguished among those who have received an early classical education, sufficiently proves that it is not to their scholastic instruction, but to self-education after the period of school, that they chiefly owed their superiority.

David, the sublime author of the Psalms, followed in his early occupations the dictates of nature ; he had, in his youth, muscular power to tear asunder the mouth of a lion, to resist the grasp of a bear, and to impart to a pebble velocity sufficient to slay a giant. Napoleon, when in the school of Brienne, was noted in the quarterly reports of that institution as enjoying *good health* ; no mention was ever made of his possessing any mental superiority ; but, in physical exercises, he was always foremost. Sir Isaac Newton, according to his own statement, was inattentive, and ranked very low in the school, which he had not entered until after the age of twelve. The mother of Sheridan long regarded him as the dullest of her children. Adam Clarke was called a "grievous dunce" by his first teacher ; and young Liebig, a "booby" by his employer. Shakspere, Molière, Gibbon, Niebuhr, Byron, Humphry Davy, Porson, and many others, were in like manner undistinguished for early application to study, and, for the most part, indulged in those wholesome bodily exercises and that freedom of mind, which contributed so much to their future excellence.

—*Marcel.*

HABIT.—I trust every thing, under God, to habit, on which, in all ages, the law-giver, as well as the schoolmaster, has mainly placed his reliance ; habit, which makes everything easy, and casts all difficulties upon the deviation from a wonted course. Make sobriety a habit, and reckless profligacy will be as contrary to the nature of the child, grown or adult, as the most atrocious crimes are to any of your lordships. Give a child the habit of sacredly regarding the truth, of carefully respecting the property of others, of scrupulously abstaining from all acts of improvidence which can involve him in distress, and he will just as likely think of rushing into an element in which he cannot breathe, as of lying, or cheating, or stealing.—*Brougham.*

Resident Editors' Cable.

GEORGE ALLEN, Jr., *Boston*. } RESIDENT EDITORS. { ELBRIDGE SMITH, *Cambridge*.
C. J. CAPEN, *Dedham*. } E. S. STEARNS, *Framingham*.

MASSACHUSETTS TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION.

THE Eleventh Annual Meeting of this Association, will be held in Lowell, at Mechanics' Hall, on Monday and Tuesday, the 26th and 27th of November.

The Association will assemble on Monday, P. M., the 26th inst., at 3 o'clock, for the transaction of preliminary business, and to hear, and act upon, the reports of the Secretary, Treasurer, and of Special Committees. After which, the prospects and management of the "Massachusetts Teacher," a journal sustained by the Association, will be discussed.

LECTURES WILL BE DELIVERED AS FOLLOWS:

On Monday evening, at 7½ o'clock, by Hon. George S. Boutwell, LL. D., Secretary of the Board of Education.

Tuesday, P. M., at 3 o'clock, by B. F. Tweed, A. M., Professor in Tufts College, Somerville.

Tuesday evening, at 7½ o'clock, by Rev. Joseph Haven, Jr., Professor of Intellectual Philosophy in Amherst College.

THE FOLLOWING SUBJECTS WILL BE IN ORDER FOR DISCUSSION:

1.—*The Propriety of requiring Scholars to Study at other times than during School Hours.*"

2.—" *The importance of Physical Geography as a Branch of Study in our Common and High Schools.*"

3.—" *The best Methods of Teaching Penmanship.*"

Teachers who may desire accommodations in private families, are requested to send their names to the Publisher of the "Massachusetts Teacher" by Monday the 19th inst.

Should arrangements for railroad facilities to those attending the meeting be made, notice thereof will be given in the Boston evening papers of the 23d and 24th inst.

JOSIAH A. STEARNS, *President.*

CHAS. J. CAPEN, *Sec'y.*

Boston, Nov. 5th, 1855.

The late appearance of the "Teacher" for this month is attributable solely to delay on account of the above notice.

C. J. C.

FOREIGN CORRESPONDENCE.

MANSFIELD, GERMANY, July, 1855.

In the last number of the "Teacher" I gave its readers a translation from the treatise of Madame de Staél, on Germany;

I wish in this to describe a visit made to a very remarkable school; remarkable not for its size, not for its liberal endowment, not for the learning of its teachers, but because it was the school which Luther attended. In the public school of Mansfeld he was a pupil from so tender an age, that his father used to bring him in his arms, up to the time when in his fifteenth year he went to study in the higher school of Magdeburg. Here it was that he received fifteen blows in one day, for Luther was no saint, either as boy or man, and was by no means so fortunate as to escape the rod. A friend in Berlin has told me, however, that in this matter, the translator of Dr. Merle's History of the Reformation has made Luther's master little better than a brute, representing that he gave the child fifteen floggings in one day. The reader who has the History at hand, would do well to turn to its pages, and correct the error, for it is hardly creditable to Luther's school-boy days, that it should stand recorded in a book so well known as Merle's History, that he received fifteen floggings within six hours.

Externally the school-room has the same appearance as when Martin Luther entered its door. Over that stands now a statue in relief of one of the courts of Mansfeld, with these lines written beneath :

Cen Trojanus equus pugnaces ventre cohortes
Edidit, eductos sic schola docta viros.
In plures nobis, Maunorum Eques, ede Lutheros
Et surgent Christo plura trophya duci.

"As the Trojan horse sent out from its belly warlike bands, so a well-taught school sends forth cultivated men. Give more Luthers to us, knight of Mansfeld, and trophies will yet rise to the victorious Christ."

Within, all is changed: the stone pavement whereon his feet trod, alone remains untouched. The walls are whitewashed, the upper rooms turned into a dwelling house for the present teacher; the old seats on which Luther used to sit have been removed and destroyed. On one the name of the Reformer was cut with a knife; that too is gone. When the last, and perhaps the only Americans who have ever been here before, visited the school five years since, the old seats were still to be seen, but since then the teacher who received them in so friendly a manner has died, and the building has been made more conformable to the wants of the present generation.

Still the spirit of Luther dwells in the place: it is called Luther's school; the Reformer's portrait is to be seen in every room, and the thick walls, the windows with their small panes, the low studded ceiling, all bring those olden times to mind, and one can easily imagine the sickly little boy, the miner's son, on the benches before him.

This is the first school for young children which I have

visited in Germany, and a description of its appearance, of the method of teaching, so far as a half day would admit of seeing it, may not be uninteresting to the readers of the "Teacher." My own investigations have therefore been confined to the Re-al Schools and the Gymansiums ; and of these I shall speak in future letters.

The Luther School in Mansfeld contains about one hundred scholars. Two classes are taught in the building where the Reformer first received instruction ; another, the class for girls, meets under the church, where Luther often preached ; and the elementary school, where both sexes are initiated into the mysteries of the German alphabet, is held in a neighboring room. These four classes form one school, and are under the general direction of Mr. Pohlmann, the instructor of the highest class. The age of the pupils is the same as in the summer schools with us ; and when they have been here grounded in Reading, Writing, Arithmetic, Geography, History, and Morals, they are sent to the neighboring town of Eisleben, the birthplace of Luther, to enter the Re-al School, and to advance to the higher stages of instruction.

The instruction given is of the most thorough kind. Everything is systematized after the general custom in Germany, and an hour is given to every class. The teachers enter thoroughly into the spirit of their work, and everything that the stranger notices bears that air of earnestness which is so grateful to see. The order of the school was nearly perfect. During the half day which I spent there, I saw no instance of whispering, nor any breach of good manners. This is the more to be wondered at, when we consider the crowded state of the rooms. The desks are not separate, as with us, and each accommodated about ten pupils. So closely are they placed together, that at the end of the session I noticed that it was impossible for the pupils to rise and walk into the aisle : they were obliged to work their way along in a very primitive manner.

At the entrance of a stranger, the pupils rise together, and give in concert, the common salutation, "Ich empfehle mich," I recommend myself ; and as he leaves the room, all rise again and say, "Adieu!" This originally French expression has become thoroughly Germanized, and is daily to be heard in the streets and in the shops. The school closes in this instance as with us, the teacher addressing himself to those sitting on each bench, but there was this difference: as each scholar left the room he said "Adieu." These were the only things which were novel, and which seem peculiar to the German character.

I had the pleasure of witnessing four school exercises, in writing, map-drawing, reading and analysis. The writing was excellent : such neat pages and carefully written copies I have never seen. One recognizes here that great feature of the

national character, that exact knowledge of the relations of parts and of sounds, which gives them their excellence in drawing and music.

The German children have this advantage in writing: they have two separate hands to learn: the Italian which we use, and the Deutsch or national hand, well adapted to rapid writing, but stiff and utterly ungainly. It is well known to the readers of the "Teacher" that German books are every year more and more printed in the Roman character. All scientific books are so; railway tickets, cards of admission to lectures, the laws printed by order of government are so, and the people are gradually becoming reconciled to the change. But the old handwriting is still clung to. I do not think that it will ever be entirely superseded. For stenographic purposes it is admirable. I have often seen students at the University take down a lecture word for word from the Professor's lips; and a system of handwriting that has this advantage, may well dispense with ornament.

The exercise in analysis which I witnessed was excellent. The terms used in German Grammar are much more intelligible to children than those of Latin origin which are employed with us. The substantive or noun, which conveys to our children no idea, because they do not know Latin, is to the German children the "Hanpt-wort," the head-word; the conjunction is the Bind-wort, the translation of which is so obvious that I will not write it. What life such a nomenclature gives to this usually unmeaning exercise, can readily be imagined.

Reading too, was very carefully, and what was better, very well taught. Mr. Giesemann, whose class I had the pleasure of hearing, is the compiler of the text-book in common use, and is himself an excellent reader. The German reading books, as I have noticed, are very different from our own. Instead of being composed mainly of extracts from classic authors, and therefore of a literary character, they are mostly made up of bits of history, natural science, geography, and while they teach the scholar to read things which are within his comprehension, they throw a great deal of light upon his school studies.

I talked with the teachers about the methods of discipline which they employ in the government of the school. They punish with the rod an incorrigible offender, but they use words so long as they are equally effective. The province of the teacher is broader than with us; they have the care of the children both within the school-room and beyond its walls. Farther than this, Mr. Pohlmann told me, that it is his duty, if he sees any boy in the place, whether his scholar or not, engaged in anything which is not correct, to exercise the same vigilance over him as over the children under his instruction. What a field for influence is thus opened to the faithful teacher.

In such duties can he realize what a hold he may have upon posterity, onerous as his career may be, he can rely that they will all be recompensed.

W. L. G.

{ POMEROY ACADEMY,
POMEROY, OHIO, July 21, 1855.

To the Resident Eds. of Mass. Teacher:—

Gentlemen, below you find a solution of the Problem which it contains.

Let BC, AC, and AB be represented by a, b, and c respectively, and the half sum of the sides by s. Bowditch's Nav., p. 14. Prop. LXI., $R^2 : (\cos. \frac{1}{2} C)^2 :: ab : s(s-c)$, hence

$$\begin{array}{rcl} R^2 & 20.000000 \\ s = 673 & 2.828015 \\ s-c = 245 & 2.389166 \\ \hline & 25.217181 \\ (\cos. \frac{1}{2} C)^2 = (\cos. 24^\circ 38'')^2 & 19.917122 \\ \hline ab = 199553 .211 & 5.300059 \\ a + b = 918. \text{ By Quadratics,} \\ b = 564.488 & \} \text{The required sides.} \\ a = 353.512 & \\ B = 91^\circ 59' 13'' & \} \text{The req. angles.} \\ A = 38^\circ 44' 47'' & \\ C = 49^\circ 16' 00'' & \end{array}$$

180° 00' 00"

The angles A and B are easily found by the following proportion, $c : a :: \sin C : \sin A = 38^\circ 44' 47'' : c : b :: \sin C : \sin B = 91^\circ 59' 13''$. The value of ab may be found by the following formula, which is given in nearly all works on Trigonometry: $\cos. \frac{1}{2} C = \sqrt{\frac{s(s-c)}{ab}}$ Peirce gives it on the 48th p., Trig. Davies, on p. 317, Legendre; Gummere on p. 59, Surveying.—Hutton's Math. p. 590.

Yours respectfully,

KEEN.

We have received other solutions which we shall endeavor to insert in the next number.

RES. EDS.

TEACHERS' INSTITUTES.

Those already appointed will be held as follows, viz. :

- At Chelsea, Oct. 1-5.
- At Shrewsbury, " 7-15.
- At Ashburnham, " 15-19.
- At Rutland, " 22-26.
- At Adams, Oct. 20, Nov. 2.
- At Yarmouth, Nov. 12-16.